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REVIEW

Of the Discussion on the Unitarian Controversy, between the REV. JOHN SCOTT PORTER *and the* REV. DANIEL BAGOT, M.A. *held in Belfast on April 14th, 1834, and three following days.* By ALEXANDER CARSON, A.M. Belfast. Pp. 58.

THE pamphlet before us, our readers are aware, has for its object to compare the arguments of Messrs. Bagot and Porter, and estimate the results. In a discussion of this kind it is usual for both sides to claim the victory. This occurred in the present instance; but the Rev. Mr. Carson has given *specific reasons* for assigning it to Mr. Bagot, against which the *general assertions* of the Unitarians will avail nothing. The French claimed the victory over the English in every encounter during the Peninsular war; but the end of the matter was, that they found themselves, against their will, on the north side of the Pyrenees.

Mr. Carson begins his Review by complaining of the terms of the discussion, as unsuitable for the platform, and peculiarly unfavourable to Mr. Bagot. In the main we believe he is right: and highly as we had previously estimated Mr. Bagot's talents, the remarks of Mr. Carson have placed in so strong a light the disadvantages against which he had to contend, that our admiration of the manner in which he acquitted himself is much increased. And we are confident that no person can read this part of the "Review" without feeling an increased desire to peruse the "Report of the Discussion," and to see how Mr. Bagot was able to achieve such a decided victory, notwithstanding the disadvantageous position in which he was placed. Mr. Carson, however, has shown his impartiality in animadverting, also, on some conditions which were proposed to Mr. Porter, but which that gentleman's friends dexterously

avoided. It was, that Mr. Porter should state distinctly what were his views concerning Christ; in other words, that he should distinctly avow, whether he was an Arian or a Socinian. Mr. Carson maintains that this was too much to require of Mr. Porter *in limine*—though circumstances might occur in the course of the debate which would render such an avowal necessary; and he gives Mr. Porter credit for good sense in refusing to advance and defend an affirmative proposition. We conceive, however, that Mr. Carson is over-candid in this: the fact seems to be, that some distinct statement of Mr. Porter's positive belief was actually promised, but the promise was fulfilled by dexterously stating, *in an affirmative form*, a proposition *really and virtually negative*. For this curious sample of Unitarian *finesse*, we refer to the conditions as printed in the "Report" of the discussion. "At the same time," as Mr. Carson observes, "Mr. Porter is perfectly explicit in avowing his sentiments, and even his doubts:" and we agree with the reviewer in respecting his candour for doing so.

Mr. Carson first takes up the opening speech of Mr. Porter, and analyzes it briefly, but with the hand of a consummate logician. Mr. Bagot's first proposition, which asserted the unity of the Godhead, Mr. Porter affects to treat as an abandonment of his own doctrine. Mr. Carson most ably exposes the sophism contained in this—the master delusion which imposes on the minds of Unitarians themselves, and which is shown to be neither more nor less than a *petitio principii*,—a very cool and authoritative taking for granted of the whole question at issue.

In animadverting on Mr. Porter's other speeches, Mr. Carson detects the same fallacy constantly recurring. It is certainly very strange that a man of talent and acuteness, and not deficient in candour, should persist in the use of so palpable a sophism. The reviewer accounts for it satisfactorily in the following passage.

"The Unitarians, it appears to me, are so much in the habit of misrepresenting their opponents as being tritheists, that they come at last, *in defiance of all evidence*, to believe that this is a part of their system. I cannot, on any other theory, explain this phenomenon."

Mr. Carson does not omit to notice what every reader of the Report of the Discussion must have observed,—the total irrelevancy of the greater part of the passages adduced by Mr. Porter: those, for example, in which the real manhood of Christ is stated,—those which record what he did, and rehearse

what he said, when acting and speaking in his mediatorial character. Nothing is more melancholy and pitiable than the obstinacy with which Unitarians constantly return to this most stupid of all fallacies—the *ignorantia Elenchi*. The question between us is not "whether Jesus Christ is *God only*, or *man only*;" but "whether he is *God and man, in two distinct natures and one person*; or *possesses only one nature, and that inferior to the divine*." Mr. Bagot eloquently and pointedly replied to Mr. Porter, again and again stating that Mr. Porter was bringing forward, as if against him, passages which proved his doctrine; and that he was very much obliged to Mr. Porter for saving him the trouble of going through this part of the proof.

Mr. Carson has done good service to the cause of truth, by pointing out the fact, that there are multitudes of passages of the strongest and most decisive kind, which Mr. Porter has never once attempted to meet. On the ground of this fact, Mr. Carson claims a decided victory for Mr. Bagot. "Surely," says he, "discussion implies defence as well as attack, and refutation as well as proof. If one argument is left unanswered, the affirmative is proved. Now here we have whole clusters of passages that have never been met. Can any man, then, doubt on which side is victory?" Then follows a cursory notice of about a dozen of the most familiar and striking of these unanswered, unanswerable texts; after which he justly adds, "But there would be no end to an enumeration of the decisive passages alleged by Mr. Bagot which his antagonist never attempted to explain. Indeed, the great body of the evidence has never been encountered." No man knows better than Mr. Carson how to enliven an abstruse or learned discussion with not unsuitable pleasantry. He has shown this in many parts of the pamphlet now before us. In a paragraph immediately following that just quoted, he observes,—

"But if Mr. Porter has refused to encounter the hosts brought to the field by his antagonist, he has, in some measure, made amends by his heroism in encountering, again and again, 1 John v. 7, which was not in the field at all. Many a soldier would rather meet a whole regiment of the enemy than encounter a single ghost. Mr. Porter is superior to this superstition, and thinks it safer to fight the phantom."

On the subject of this disputed text, which Mr. Bagot, with great good sense and propriety, did not quote, and would not take up when Mr. Porter most unjustifiably dragged it in, Mr. Carson has a few modest, but really profound remarks,

which are worthy of the attention of every scholar. He shows that the utmost that can be said against it is, that *its authenticity cannot be proved.* Unitarians take for granted not only that *it has been proved spurious,* but that *it is an intentional forgery.* Nothing can be more groundless—nothing more uncandid. Their object is quite in keeping with the artifice they employ in all other matters of controversy. They wish to cast odium on the cause of their opponents, by representing it as needing so base a resource. The text in question may be spurious, but there is not a shadow of evidence for its being a forgery.

The most amusing thing, perhaps, in the whole discussion is Mr. Porter's deliberate and cool refusal to reply to Mr. Bagot's texts!! On this Mr. Carson animadverts with great ability, and pronounces it, most truly, to be "A VIRTUAL SURRENDER."

Mr. Carson next "takes a glance at a few of Mr. Bagot's passages, which his antagonist explains in a forced, unsatisfactory, and manifestly insufficient manner." In his remarks on these texts, and on the conduct of the combatants with regard to them, there is more real learning, and profound philosophical and critical knowledge, than in many quarto volumes; and all brought forward so modestly, with such freedom from technical terms, and such unpretending simplicity, that the ordinary reader would never imagine them to be the result of learning at all. The unlearned can understand it: the learned will relish its excellence. The observations on John i. 1, "The word was God," are particularly valuable. The few pages that contain them are alone worth five times the price of the pamphlet.

The great and almost singular excellencies of this extraordinary man are his clear philosophical conception, and his fearless philosophical spirit. Even the German exegetical writers are only *scholars:* the true *critic* is made up of the *scholar* and the *philosopher* combined. The scarcity of such critics is much to be deplored; and it is highly to be desired that their number should be increased. Most cordially, therefore, do we concur with Mr. Carson in the following eloquent exhortation:

"Let the friends of Jesus, then, study criticism as a science. It is this that will enable them to triumph: it is this that can give definite meaning to words and phrases in themselves indefinite: it is this that will unravel sophistry, and trace the laws of human thought in human language.—It is quite enough for them (the Unitarians) if they can say, that such a word

may, possibly, in such a case, have such a meaning. Now, it is the business of criticism to hunt evasion through every subterfuge; and fix the meaning of the contested passage by the laws of language."

In fine, we advise each and every one of our readers to procure a copy of the "Report of the Discussion," and a copy of Mr. Carson's Review, and have them bound up together. The discussion contains, in the speeches of Mr. Bagot, a vast collection of theological and critical learning, which never was brought together in so cheap and convenient a form before. The Review teaches the right use of this store, and points out *how* and *why* Mr. Porter failed. It shows that instead of *proof* he gives *assertion*—that instead of replying to his antagonist's arguments, he nicknames them sophisms—that instead of explaining the texts produced against him, he coolly says he has not time to take them up, and most unhandsomely sneers at the admirable fluency and readiness with which Mr. Bagot produced them, as "parrotting them over"*—that instead of sitting in judgment, like a scholar, on the different meanings assigned to words, and the various readings of contested passages, he appeals, like a school-boy, to the authority of lexicographers and collators—that instead of bringing forward his criticisms at the proper time, which would have exposed him to the counter criticisms of his opponent, he reserved them, as conscious of their unsoundness, for his last speech, to which, by the terms of the controversy, Mr. Bagot could not reply.

PRESENT SALVATION.

We are too much in the habit of supposing salvation to be altogether future—a state of safety and blessedness, of which we shall be put in possession only when we shall have reached heaven. This is a great mistake; and, like all other errors in religion, it is hurtful to comfort and holiness. Much of the

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* There never was a more unfounded charge. "Parrotting," if we may venture to comment on the elegant word, means going rapidly over what one does not understand. Mr. Bagot's texts were well chosen, well arranged, judiciously illustrated, in many cases, by a brief running commentary. Mr. Porter lost his temper when he found his antagonist possessed of an extensive, and intimate, and intelligent acquaintance with Scripture, which he knew must put him to shame.

Christian's salvation, it is true, is yet future. Even at death it is not complete: it is not until the morning of the resurrection shall have brought with it the redemption of the body, and the judgment day shall have publicly proclaimed the acquittal and blessedness of the redeemed, that the top-stone shall have been put on the great building of mercy. Still the salvation which shall be completed hereafter has its commencement here. It is not merely matter of promise and of hope; it is matter, also, of present possession, and present enjoyment. This is a point that cannot be presented too frequently, or pressed too urgently on our thoughts.

The Scriptures address Christians as already in a state of grace; and every one is concerned to bring the matter home to himself in solemn inquiry. Every human being, as surely as he is born of a woman, is born in sin; and it is not more certain that Christians are children of Adam, than that they were by nature children of wrath, even as others. Let every one put the case to his own conscience. The work of salvation has already commenced in my soul, or I still lie under the guilt, pollution, and misery of sin. I am at this moment, either forgiven of God, or I am still under condemnation. If I am not already born again, I must be dead in sin. I must be at this moment either under grace or wrath; either a child of God, or under the power of Satan; either on the way to heaven or hell. There is no middle condition: just as in the future world there is no third place between heaven and hell, so here there is no middle, no third condition between Christ and the devil; pardon and condemnation, regenerate and unregenerate.

The Scriptures uniformly address believers as in possession of a present salvation. "Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God." "Ye *were* as sheep going astray, but *are now* returned to the shepherd and bishop of your souls." "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." I write unto you, little children, because your sins *are* forgiven you." "There is, therefore, *now no* condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." "Such *were* some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." In these passages, the saving privileges and blessings specified, are declared to be the property of believers; not in future prospect, but in present possession. They are the sons of God, and they are so *now;* they are *now* returned to the bishop of souls. Everlasting life is a blessing, not only which they shall inherit, but a blessing which they *have*. The sins of the chil-

dren of God *are* forgiven them: they *are* in Christ: there is *no* condemnation to them; and they *are* justified and sanctified.

The Scriptures speak more strongly still on this head. Not only do they represent Christians as in possession of present blessings; they speak of them in the past time as having been so. The Christian, ever since the moment that he came to Christ, has been in the possession of these blessings; he *has* tasted that the Lord is gracious; his salvation is matter of experience, and matter of personal history. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus *hath made* me free from the law of sin and death." "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, *hath* quickened us together with Christ." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who *hath* blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ." "Giving thanks unto the Father who *hath* made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who *hath* delivered us from the power of darkness, and *hath* translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we *have* redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

If we follow out the matter, we shall find ample evidence in Scripture to convince us, that there is not an ingredient in the Christian salvation, which is not represented as a present Christian attainment. Is forgiveness an essential ingredient? We *have* the forgiveness of sins. Is acceptance? "He *hath* made us accepted in the Beloved." Is peace of conscience a testimony from God within us, that he has forgiven us? "Being justified by faith we *have* peace with God." Faith in Christ, repentance toward God, love, joy, peace, rest of soul, are all spiritual ingredients of salvation, and no Christian is a stranger to these graces. The Christian has experience of the salvation of Christ—he has felt the operation of its blessings—he exercises the graces of the Spirit. He not only feels but acts; for in believing, and loving, and obeying, there is not only an experience of the agency of the Holy Spirit in quickening us, but an exercising, and a putting forth voluntarily and actively, the power of spiritual life, which the Spirit has imparted. We therefore work out our salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in us to will and to do. This spiritual life and activity which the Christian experiences and exerts within himself, is, like natural life, the evidence of its own existence; and as we know we have souls, from our consciousness of thinking and feeling, in like manner, we know that we have spiritual life, from the con-

sciousness which we have of spiritual operations. The Christian exercises himself to godliness; and this exercising of himself to godliness, is the best evidence of the power and being of godliness. The operation of every grace of the spirit is the best proof of the presence and power of that grace within us. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself." "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

The consideration that salvation is a present salvation cannot, if we reflect right, but come with startling power to our minds. I am, at this present moment, either saved or not saved. If I am not now the saved of the Lord, how know I that ever I shall be saved? There is a possibility that I may not. I am not sure of a next year, nor of an old age, nor of the preparatory sickness of a dying bed to fit me for eternity. There is no certainty of a day, or of a moment; and there is but the breath I draw between me and the world of retribution.

What shall we say of the multitude around us! Are they saved? Alas! what evidence is there of this? How much is there to awaken our alarm respecting the immense majority? Not only is it certain that they are not now in a state of salvation; not only is it possible that they may never be saved, but the *probability* is against them. How many calls have they slighted? how many warnings have they despised? how many awakenings have they repressed? how many convictions have they extinguished? Shall the Spirit of God always strive with the obstinate and rebellious? Is not God justly provoked to abandon the incorrigible to their hardness and impenitence? The abandonment of the obstinately impenitent is judicial on the part of God. It is giving them up to their own choice, and leaving them to eat the fruit of their own doings. "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone." "My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me; so I gave them up to their own hearts' lusts, and they walked in their own councils." "I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: so I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest."

It is easy to trace that obstinacy of impenitence and of wickedness from which there is no return to proper moral causes; and while we behold, in such a case, the most awful moral monument of God's judicial displeasure on this side hell, we see in it, at the same time, the natural result of sin's operation on the heart and conscience. When we stifle our awakenings

and convictions, in returning again they return with less strength and vividness than before. When we delay from time to time our purposes in relation to our salvation, they never recur but with a growing abatement of energy and determination. Our sense of danger becomes less and less; and motives, consequently, come weaker and weaker to the mind. The power and habit of sin are acquiring a growing dominion over the soul. The obstacles to our salvation are becoming more numerous and powerful. As danger becomes more imminent, fear dies altogether away. A benumbing lethargy, the most fatal presage of approaching death, settles down upon the soul. Alas! that its first awakening should be the surprise of perdition, the undying torment of despair.

While we delay in relation to our salvation, our moral hazard increases. Motives are daily becoming more feeble, evil propensities more strong, sinful habits more confirmed, the soul more wedded to wickedness, and the possibility of salvation, humanly speaking, more difficult and unlikely. To neglect the great salvation now, is a species of proof that we shall neglect it till the day of salvation has passed away for ever. If aroused by this thought, let us instantly set to work with our might; if we are not up and doing, the alarm, if it ever return to us again, is sure to return with diminished power; and though it should rouse us now, it may perhaps rouse us no more. Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation.

A present salvation is the salvation which is uniformly preached to us, and pressed on us in the word of God. It tampers not with our danger—it parleys not with our sins—it gives no quarter to sloth, no connivance to delay. By every description of means, addressed to every part of our intellectual and moral nature, it seeks to win and to alarm us. It persuades our reason, it awakens our conscience, rouses fear, kindles hope, engages the affections; but does not all proceed on this principle, *Now, now, now* is the accepted time,—*now* is the day of salvation? "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

It is of vital importance that preachers of the Gospel should construct their sermons on this principle, and preach a present salvation to the people. Alas! it is to be feared that we who preach, as well as those who hear, are not sufficiently alive to this important feature of the salvation of Christ. Good men, in different denominations, do set forth salvation as a free salvation—a full salvation—an everlasting salvation; and they

exalt the exceeding riches of divine grace: but I fear that there is a great defect in not pressing home salvation as a present salvation. It would send away the doubtful decided one way or other in regard to themselves; the thoughtless it would send away self-condemned, penitent, prayerful: while it would call forth to more vigorous exercise the gratitude and praises of the experienced Christian.

Where there is a decided deadness among hearers in relation to a present salvation, there must, generally speaking, be something wrong with the mind or heart of the preacher in relation to the same great subject. How can this idea possess itself of the hearts of the people if it flow not from the pulpit; and how can it flow forth from the pulpit if it fill not the heart and mind of the preacher? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The people are barren because of our pulpit barrenness, and our pulpits are barren only because of the leanness of our souls. Let us but be awakened to the mighty and urgent interests of a present salvation, and our hearts, by God's grace, shall overflow with an exuberance of warmth and earnestness to the refreshing of the church, and the awakening of multitudes. Be it our study and our prayer, that God may "clothe" us, his ministers, "with salvation;" and then, as the native and happy effect of our ministrations, we have the promise that his "saints shall shout aloud for joyfulness." "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments: As the dew of Hermon, that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for ever more."

For several years a vast mass of facts have been before the churches here, showing that our Lord has remarkably visited the American churches, and granted our American brethren numerous revivals of religion. A revival of religion is an awakening in a church, in consequence of which, a number of persons thoughtless before, become pious and give themselves to the Lord. Doubtless, every such revival where it is real, is the work of the Spirit; but still he is true to his own appointed means, and it is usually by the preaching of the Gospel, that the Spirit comes in his refreshing power. Facts declare and experience proves that the description of preaching most effective and most honoured in producing extensive revivals is the preaching of a present salvation, in connexion with its other Gospel accompaniments. It is true, there has been much wildfire among American revivals; but during

a time of religious excitement extravagance may be looked for; the sanctification of even the most matured Christians is but imperfect, much more that of young converts; and Satan is never so busy to sow his tares and bring religion into discredit as when it is most prosperous. It is also true, the circumstances of America differ from those of this country; but still, it is true, that there is such a thing as a revival of religion;—we need such a revival among us; it comes from God; the Spirit of God is not straitened that he should not confer it on Irishmen as well as on our American brethren; it may be had in the use of means; and while we pray, "Revive thy work among us," let us in our preaching, as ministers, and our conversation, as private Christians, preach and urge, with prayerfulness to God and all earnestness to our fellow men, a present salvation. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God: but exhort one another daily, while it is called *to-day;* lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

"Let Zion's watchmen all awake
And take the alarm they give."

Let us preach down to men; let us address them as possessed of reason, conscience, and affections; let us not consent merely to perform a part before them, for their amusement, their excitement, their intellectual or literary gratification; let us enter into their hearts, and in their hearts and consciences plant that lever which shall lift them to life and to God. Let the pleadings of a present salvation go forth from our pulpits with a life, and earnestness, and power, which can be felt in a manner fitting the mighty theme, and when it has wholly engrossed our own hearts, then may we expect and ask the Spirit to come down in his awakening and reviving energy, as in the days of old—as in the years of ancient time. "Awake," let us earnestly say to men, "awake to the concerns of the soul and of salvation. Too long have you slept the sleep of death. Thin is the partition that separates us from the invisible world, yet so dull and dead are we, that we live as if eternity were a fable, and death an everlasting sleep. Heaven and hell are awake around us. The devil and his angels seek to drag us to their den of woe. Angels are ready to rejoice over our repentance, and hail our accession to the family of God. What meanest thou, O sleeper? Awake, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!"

It is not merely for its awakening power, that preaching a

present salvation is urged and commended. The Christian minister can appeal to the experience of decided Christians, as next to the word of God; the most satisfactory and triumphant proof of the reality and power of the salvation of Christ. The apostles could appeal to miracles wrought before the eyes of men, for the truth of their mission. Bring here, they could say, that blind man, and behold he sees. There is a dumb man, and by the power of Christ, we give him speech. To the cripple we say, arise and walk, and lo! his limbs are whole. Here is a dead body—we invoke the name of Jesus, and behold he walks forth before you a living man. The preachers of the Gospel are able to work no miracles now; yet in the experience of believers, we are able to appeal to a greater miracle than any instantaneous cure wrought on the bodies of men; we are able to adduce the faith, and repentance, and love, and peace, and joy of Christians, as triumphant attestations of the fulness and freeness of God's pardoning mercy, the infinite merit of Christ's atoning blood, and the subduing energy of the Holy Spirit. Do we invite sinners to come to Christ? How happy is it that we have among our hearers those who can attest the reality of the promise, and second our invitations by declaring, We have made the experiment, and have found rest for our souls. Do we preach the forgiveness of sins? How happy is it that there are those among us who can set to their seal that this is true, for they have felt peace and joy in believing. Do we set forth the blessedness of union and fellowship with Christ? It is worth a thousand disquisitions, when the voice of Christian experience, issuing warm from the heart, declares—"Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." When we preach of love and peace, in such a world as this, agitated, as it is, by fierce and fiery passions, what an image does it present of heaven, when we are able to point to a little brotherhood of worshippers, associating from Sabbath to Sabbath, in the house of God, and partaking, at the table of the Lord, of the same emblems of their common redemption, and whose whole deportment declares in language stronger than words, "By this we *know we have* passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Happy is the minister who can thus make his appeal to church members, and hold them up alike to Christians and to gainsayers, as living evidence of the fact and of the power of a *present* salvation.—"Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living

God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." CEPHAS.

THE THEATRE.—TESTIMONY OF WISE MEN.

THE newspapers tell us that the "busy note of preparation" is once more heard from the Belfast Theatre. The public are called to be on the tip-toe of expectation; and the usual machinery of puffing and of advertising are put in requisition for the purpose of filling the house, and the pockets of the manager. For some years past there has been a bitter note of lamentation from theatres generally, on account of the decline of public patronage. The theatre must decline as religion increases. Make religion paramount and the theatre goes down. Theatrical amusements are hostile to piety and virtue. We know not how a Christian can frequent the play-house. To the rising generation we deem it fraught with the most pernicious influences. We call attention to the recorded decision of the most competent judges of ancient time.

Many of these opinions we find collected by Styles, and from his book we therefore copy.

"Could I summon into one interesting group the venerable men who have, in every age, instructed and astonished the world by their wisdom and their virtue, and collect their aggregate opinion on the character and moral influence of the stage, the decision, were it uniform, would demand some consideration; and from it, presumption itself would not venture to appeal. But this is not practicable, nor is it necessary; their sentiments on this subject are upon record. There is scarcely a distinguished name among the philosophers, legislators, and moralists of the world but is hostile to the theatre; and they have left, by their historians, or in their writings, an imperishable monument inscribed with their protest against the stage.

"'It is an invariable fact in the history of all nations,' says Clement, 'a fact which has been carefully recorded by historians, that the refinement and increase of public spectacles has essentially contributed to that universal depravation of public and private morality, which has almost always been either the secret or obvious cause of the fall of empires.' What caused the ruin of the flourishing republic of Greece? Ask the wisest of her philosophers—ask the most eloquent of her orators. The games, the theatres; these excited a fondness for the magnificent and marvellous, and a disgust for simplicity and propriety. It was complained that the magistrates and

people neglected the care of public affairs; the young men abandoned their salutary exertions to frequent the theatres; the indolence and effeminacy of one sex produced delicacy and morbid sensibility in the other, and the dissoluteness of Greece became a proverb in history.'

"Rome was long virtuous; and she remained so while the theatre was unknown. Augustine beautifully remarks, that 'Theatricas artes virtus Romana non noverat'—Roman virtue had been unacquainted with the theatrical art. 'But,' observes a Roman author, 'when conquered, Greece taught her this fatal art; she taught her, at the same time, all her vices. The wisest of the Romans foresaw this: he had strenuously opposed the establishment of a regular theatre, asserting, that it would be to Rome a more dangerous Carthage than that which they had just destroyed. He then succeeded in his opposition, but unfortunately he succeeded but for a short time; and the event showed that Cato was not deceived.'

"Livy unites his testimony with that of Justin, and condemns the theatre. Philosophers follow in the same train:—'Plays,' says Plato, 'raise the passions, and pervert the use of them, and are of course dangerous to morality.' Again, 'The diversions of the stage are dangerous to temper and sobriety; they swell anger and desire too much. Tragedy is apt to make men boisterous, and comedy, buffoons. Those passions are cherished which ought to be checked: virtue loses ground, and reason grows precarious: vice makes an insensible approach, and steals upon us in the disguise of pleasure.'

"Legislators have joined their protest to historians and philosophers. The wisest legislators of Greece and Rome did their utmost to damp a theatrical spirit, but in vain. Thespis, the first improver of the dramatic art, lived in the time of Solon. 'That wise legislator,' says Rollin, 'upon seeing his pieces performed, expressed his dislike by striking his staff against the ground.'

"I might fatigue the reader with quotations from names of the most distinguished eminence. It would be tedious—it would be useless. It is enough to remark that Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, Cicero, Livy, Valerius Maximus, Solon and Cato, Seneca and Tacitus, the most venerable men of antiquity—a constellation of talents the greatest that ever shone—have all condemned the stage. We may add to these the fathers of the church.

"Augustine confesses, with a noble frankness, worthy of a true penitent, that at the theatre he imbibed all the venom

which corrupted his heart. 'Yes,' said Tertullian, 'I will grant that your theatrical representations are simple, fascinating, and even respectable; but does he who prepares a poisonous draught mix gall and wormwood in the bowl? No: he conceals its deadly qualities by infusing sweet and aromatic ingredients.' 'Even,' observes Augustine, 'if there were no other objection to the theatre than the intercourse of the sexes, not to speak of the criminal behaviour of women, utterly destitute of modesty, who seek, by their languishing gestures, their penetrating voices, their impassioned action, to inflame, to consume you with the fierceness of desire.'

"Miss Baillie, a modern writer of most admirable talents, though she does not absolutely condemn the stage, is constrained, as a moralist, to enter her protest against busy; that is, fashionable comedy:—'The moral tendency of it,' she observes, 'is very faulty; that mockery of age and domestic authority, so constantly held forth, has a very bad effect upon the younger part of an audience; and that continual lying and deceit in the first characters of the piece, which is necessary for conducting the plot, has a most pernicious one.'

"The story of the unfortunate Laberius, exhibits in a strong point of view the odium which was attached to the profession of an actor among the Romans. Compelled by Cæsar, at an advanced period of life, to appear on the stage to recite some of his own works, he felt his character as a Roman citizen, insulted and disgraced; and in some affecting verses, spoken on the occasion, he incensed the audience against the tyrant, by whose mandate he was obliged to appear before them. 'After having lived,' said he 'sixty years with honour, I left my house this morning a Roman knight, but shall return to it this evening an *infamous stage player.* Alas! I have lived a day too long!'"

TRUE AND FALSE RELIGION.

Religion is derived from a Latin word which signifies to bind; and religion is that which binds the soul to God. Man is a fallen being,—his mind enmity to God and depraved in all its powers. The religion of fallen man must therefore be a religion adapted to his condition—a religion which shall reconcile him with his Maker—assure him of forgiveness—renew his disordered nature—set up the reign of love in his heart—and open up a living spring of happiness in his bosom. Man was originally constituted a religious being; loving, obeying,

glorifying, worshipping his Maker with all his soul: and amid the ruins of the fall, we discover under a thousand forms of false religion indications of man's original religious constitution—indications of the principle of a religious tendency still in human nature, though like every other principle debased and perverted to improper objects. Wherever the human mind is not enlightened by the truth and Spirit of God, man's religious tendencies are enlisted in one or other of the innumerably diversified forms of false religion; and though the ingenuity of the human mind may construct systems, as pagans do their idolatrous temples, and though idol dogmas of varied name, may be set up on their respective altars, yet the true Deity is unknown—there is no Shekinah in the sanctuary—no mercy-seat or propitiation—no sanctifying Spirit—no acceptance—no true worship.

True religion, as it leads to God, must come from God. It is his to reveal and to enact it. It is his to enact, for he only is Lord of the conscience to prescribe with an authority that shall enforce obedience. It is his to reveal; for unless he reveal it, how shall man know how to approach or to worship him, or how shall his worship be of faith—faith which must have reference to a divine appointment? All inventions of men corrupt religion, and invade the authority of Christ, who is the only king, head, and lawgiver of his church. To "walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," is what we should make our constant aim; *all* these, we should exercise ourselves to keep—keep in their entireness, but beyond these we should consider it profanity to tresspass, for "whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Our catechism, in expounding the second commandment, excellently observes, that it requires the "observing and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his word." We are to keep them—keep them because they are God's ordinances—keep them *all*—keep them pure, without any human additions—keep them entire, without taking aught from them.

Men often imagine that they can improve upon the institutions of Christ. They complain that the forms of worship adopted from the New Testament are too bare and naked; not considering that their simplicity is their beauty, and that, like all genuine loveliness, they are, when "unadorned, adorned the most." They tell us that the imagination should be stimulated—that there should be an imposing ceremonial to attract the multitude, and that the senses should be addressed in order

to excite and to fix the sluggish and the volatile. Hence paintings and images in churches—hence Lent and Good Friday, Saints' days and holydays, Christmas days, and Easter days, Ember days, and Rogation days—hence robes and surplices, liturgies and instrumental music;—hence the cross in baptism, bowing towards the east, and bodily bowing at the name of Jesus;—hence the subordination of the clergy, through the whole unscriptural gradation of the prelatical hierarchy—archbishops and bishops, deans and subdeans, and archdeacons, deacons, rectors, vicars, and curates;—hence the substitution of the king, by the English Church, as temporal head, in room of the Pope, making the king, a layman, the fountain of ecclesiastical power, in appointing her bishops and modelling her worship. These things, indeed, as the Scripture says, have a "*shew* of worship," but they are pronounced "will-worship;" and we are commanded not to be "subject to ordinances which are after the commandments of men;" "Touch not, taste not, handle not," Col. ii. 16—23.

It is a notable fact, that those who are most zealous with regard to religious ceremonies and observances of human institutions, are much more strict and zealous in the observance of them than of the positive institutions of Jesus Christ. Those, for example, observe the Sabbath with least strictness, who are most zealous in the observance of Saints' days and holydays, for which no better reason can be assigned than the authority of the "Church."

Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, was one great source of the corruption of Christianity by the great antichristian apostacy. Human inventions were at first gradually introduced, but having once got hold of the soil, they struck deep roots, and shot high their towering tops, and spread far and wide their overshadowing branches, so that the plants of God's planting were choked beneath the Upas shade. And was not each of them introduced under plausible pretences of decency and of piety? What could appear more becoming, than that certain days should be observed in honour of the martyrs, and that their relicks should be had in remembrance? Might it not appear a likely means of impressing the multitude to set up in churches, images of the saints, and paintings representing the great events connected with our redemption? Might it not appear an evidence of complete dependence on the atonement, every where to set up figures of the cross on which the Redeemer of the world expiated the guilt of sin? Might it not appear reasonable and right that the more learned,

talented, and eloquent among the clergy, those who resided in cities, and who had the largest share of influence and of fame, should be entrusted, by their humbler brethren, with a larger share of power in the management of ecclesiastical affairs? And yet, from this small beginning, arose that antichristian hierarchy, which reigned, for centuries, supreme over the minds and consciences of men, shutting out the light of God's word, and dragging the religion of Christ with their witchcraft abominations, concocted under the midnight of Christianity, and in the absence of the lights of heaven.

The simple remedy for expelling and expurgating the corruptions of Christianity, is a rigid adherence to the word of God. This was the two-edged sword which, in the hands of the reformers, hewed down the abominations of antichrist, and put to flight the legions of the man of sin. It was the word of God which, at the Reformation, shook Babylon to her centre, carried confusion and dismay to the gates of Rome, made the Pontiff shake, as if ague-stricken, on his throne, and will yet shiver to fragments the tottering dominion of Papal power.

Christ is the only legislator of his church; we are to look for his religion in his word; and when we hear excellent ministers of the Episcopal church give utterance to the noble sentiment, "*The Bible, the whole Bible*, and *nothing but the Bible*," we cannot help wishing that their church would assert her right, in spite of kings and parliaments, to reform and model herself in strict accordance with it.

A supreme regard for the authority of God is the foundation of all religion and virtue. God speaks to us in his word; his word, therefore, is the "only rule of faith and manners." "The duty which God requires of man," says our catechism, "is obedience to his *revealed* will." "The word of God is the only rule to direct us," says the same excellent compend of divine truth. By this supreme standard we are to try every thing relating to the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of the church; and under pain of the plagues written in the word of God, we are neither to add nor take away.

CEPHAS.

SELECTIONS FROM DR. WARDLAW'S CHRISTIAN ETHICS, ON INTERESTING POINTS OF PRESENT PUBLIC DISCUSSION.

Difference between the FOUNDATION *and the* STANDARD *of virtue.*—The distinction between the *principle* or founda-

tion of moral virtue, and the *rule* or *standard* of its requirements, is one which admits of a simple and satisfactory illustration, from what takes place under human governments. A law appears in the Statute-book, requiring or prohibiting some specified act. This law is the rule by which, in the matter whereto it relates, the conduct of the inhabitants of the country must be regulated. We shall suppose the law to be a prohibitory one—simply affixing a definite penalty to a definite deed, without assigning any reason for the prohibition. But although no reason appears on the Statute-book, it does not follow that no reason existed in the minds of those legislators by whom the enactment was introduced. Here, then, we have the *rule* and the principle of the rule. In ten thousand cases, the subject may know nothing beyond the rule of conduct itself. He finds the law existing; and without any attempt to discover the original grounds of its enactment, he regulates his conduct accordingly. Others, however, may not be satisfied with the knowledge of its existence: they may be desirous to find a satisfactory reply—not merely to the question, *What is the law?* but the further question, WHY *is the law what it is?* The answer to the first, determines the rule: the answer to the second, the principle of the rule.

Depravity does not alter obligation.—The fallen and sinful state of human nature, has produced no alteration on the principles of obligation, and the essential elements of virtue. Whatever these principles were before man fell, they continue the same after he had fallen, and they will remain, and must for ever remain, like the divine Being himself, unaltered and unalterable. The harmony of man's nature with those principles, was what constituted its original rectitude; and in its contrariety to those principles, consists its present depravity. The obligations that lie upon man in his fallen state, are the very same with those which lay upon him in his state of primitive innocence. His not feeling these obligations is his guilt. A change of character in any subject of the moral government of Deity, can never occasion a change in the principles of that government. The law is neither annulled, nor altered by the rebellion of the subject.

The will of God not the origin of the principles of rectitude, but itself determined by them.—It appears to be a sentiment which, so far from there being any presumption in affirming it, it would be dishonourable to the divine Being to question—that while to his creatures, his will is the immediate rule and ground of obligation; yet, in its legislative prescriptions,

that will is not capricious and arbitrary: that there must be certain principles by which it is itself determined, conformity to which, is what, in his estimation, constitutes right, and disconformity wrong; and by which, consequently, the rule of duty presented by him to his intelligent offspring are dictated: that, in short, with regard to every moral duty, there is an important sense, in which the proposition, however startling the terms of it may be to the inconsiderate mind, is manifestly true: that it is not right, because God wills it, but that God wills it because it is right. It is that, whatsoever it be, on account of which God wills it, and conformity to which constitutes it in his eyes right, that the original, or elementary and essential principles of moral virtue properly consist.

Conformity to the nature of God, the foundation of virtue.—If he exists by an absolute necessity, then, by the same necessity he not only *is*, but *is what he is*. And whether his nature be considered physically, intellectually, or morally, the observation is equally true. Whatever attributes belong to it, they belong to it by the same necessity that is predicated of his existence. If, therefore, in tracing back existence we arrive at our ultimate point in Deity,—the eternal necessity of his being; must not the same be the result in tracing to their origin the principles of moral rectitude? Here, also, do we not reach our ultimate point in Deity? If we cannot go farther back in *being*, can we in regard to *principle*? Are we not arrested and fixed by the eternal necessity of the principles of the divine character,—the attributes or qualities of the Divine nature,—just as really and as finally, as we are by the necessity of the divine existence? It must be in the moral world as it is in the physical; with regard to virtue as with regard to matter and mind. In tracing back *existence*, we come to the necessity of God's *being*: in tracing back *principles*, we come to the necessity of God's *character*. When we have thus resolved the *ultimate principles of moral rectitude in the creature, into conformity with the eternal and immutable prototype of all excellence in the* NATURE OF GODHEAD, our minds repose in delightful satisfaction on this secure resting-place. The conclusion to which we have come, while it seems the obvious dictate of enlightened reason, has the additional recommendation to the pious mind, of being eminently glorifying to God. It is, that instead of any abstract fitness being the standard or measure of the Divine nature, the Divine nature must itself be the origin and standard of all fitness:—that just as the necessary existence of Deity is the origin

of all other being, so the necessary moral principles of the Divine nature are the source and pattern of all other excellencies; and that, virtue in the creature is conformity to this divine original. The essential principles of rectitude having existed in Deity before creation, and being, consequently, altogether independent of the relations to which creation gave rise,—the fitness of all these relations, and of the duties respectively arising out of them, are not standards, but only manifestations of the principles of the divine character, having all of them their origin from those principles, and being all of course in harmony with them. Why Deity is what he is, is a question which can never be asked but by a combination of presumptuous impiety and egregious folly. We can say no more than what we have said, that he is what he is by an eternal and unalterable necessity. And on the grounds which have been mentioned, it matters little whether we speak of *moral goodness* as consisting in conformitity to his *nature*, or in conformity to his *will;* there being a necessary and perfect coincidence between the one and the other; his *will* being the counterpart of his nature, and the expression and indication of his character to his rational creatures.

The *Utilitarian Theory.*—If instead of representing utility as the *foundation* of the principles of moral rectitude, or as that *on account* of which they are to be regarded as right, the utilitarian theorists had represented it as a *manifestation of the nature and tendency of those principles*, they would have come nearer the truth. It must be obvious to every mind, that a principle may in its nature, when put into practical exercise, be fitted to produce happiness, whilst yet the production of happiness is not that which constitutes the rectitude of the principle. While I more than hesitate to admit that utility, or the tendency to happiness, is the ultimate principle into which moral rectitude is to be resolved; there can be no hesitation in admitting, that happiness is the direct and invariable result of the putting forth of the principles of moral rectitude on the part of the Godhead;—as a consequence that, when understood in its *proper extent*, and estimated by a *mind* of *capability sufficient to comprehend that extent*, utility, though not itself constituting rectitude, becomes its legitimate and correct criterion.

But I must be allowed to explain what I mean by the *proper extent* of utility, and by the *necessity* for a *sufficiently comprehensive mind*, to make it the rule of judgment. In the first place, there are few or none of our utilitarian philosophers

who give comprehension enough to the term utility. When we do take the term in its due fulness of comprehension, we have then assuredly before our minds, all that we can imagine to have been in our Creator's view, in the production and arrangement of the great system of being; the *glory of* his own name, and the happiness of all else that exists, exhausting all the possibilities of final causation. And from this it unquestionably follows, that whatever in conduct is in harmony with the glory of God and the good of the universe, cannot fail to be also in harmony with the principles of moral rectitude. But then, *secondly*, the criterion is one prodigiously too vast and complicated, to be brought into application by our minds, or by the mind of any creature—in a word, the test is manifestly one which no mind but the Divine mind is possessed of sufficient extension, and intuitive certainty of discernment, to apply, with any approach to precision. What is the conclusion? The conclusion is, that it must be applied by Deity for us; and in what way soever may seem to him best, Deity must communicate to us the results; which leads us by a somewhat different route, to the same point at which we formerly arrived; the communications of such results amounting to the same thing with the *revelation* to us of *his will;* and his *will, so discovered, becoming the rule or law of* our conduct.

Pernicious effects of separating religion and morality. —I know few things more preposterous in theory, or more mischievous in effect, than the prevailing divorce between religion and morality; the manner in which they are not only spoken of in the current vocabulary of the world, but even treated in the disquisitions of philosophy, as if they were separable and separate things. The virtues of truth, and integrity, and honour, especially when united with generosity and kindness, will secure the designation *of a good man*, although there should be no very rigid adherence to those of temperance and chastity; but if these are, in any unusual degree, united with the former, the man becomes a paragon of goodness, the very best of men, and sure of heaven, if any on earth are. The union described, is a rarity, except under the influence of religious principle; but we shall suppose it. What, it may be asked, can be wished for more? "What lacketh he yet?" I answer, in one word, *godliness:* that which ought to preside over all these virtues; infuse its spirit into them all, and without which, they are destitute of the first principle of true morality.

It is lamentable to find in the writings of ethical philoso-

phers, the same dissociating principle: discussions on morals, such as would require no material alteration to accommodate them to atheism: and even at times in the treatises of philosophical divines, so indistinct a recognition of the basis on which the whole system of ethics ought ever to rest. It is *far otherwise in the Holy Scriptures.* It is one of the distinguishing peculiarities of all Bible Morality, that it *begins with God:* that it makes *godliness* its first and fundamental principle. The first commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and strength, and mind." Thus God stands first. For Him is claimed the throne of the heart. The foundation of all morals is laid in devotion. No right moral principle is there admitted to exist, independent of a supreme regard to Deity. No true goodness is acknowledged without this.

Scripture views of God.—There are four short sentences of Holy Writ, which contain in them more of the knowledge of God than all the unaided wisdom of man had ever been able to discover: "GOD IS A SPIRIT;" "GOD IS ONE;" "GOD IS LIGHT;" "GOD IS LOVE." Spirituality of essence, unity of subsistence, purity of nature, and benevolence of character, are thus, with a sublime brevity, predicated of Jehovah. Light and love, complete the character of his *moral* nature. They are inseperable. All the operations of his benevolence are in harmony with his unsullied purity, and blended with his infinite benevolence. The love dwells in light: and the light diffuses itself in beams of love. HOLY LOVE, then, is the essential character of the Godhead. And in accordance with this delightful view of the Maker and Lord of all, holy love appears to be the general law of the universe, the bond of union, the spring of action, the fountain of joy.

Love to God the principle of all goodness.—Let Christians assume and occupy, and resolutely maintain the high ground of the Bible: that LOVE TO GOD not only takes precedence of every other affection of the soul, but is the TRUE MORAL PRINCIPLE OF ALL THE REST, and of whatever in practice is entitled to the name of virtue. This love to God, involving as it does, complacency in his holy nature, is itself holiness: and this is the virtue of the Bible: the only virtue that can be recognized and accepted by the God of light and love, whom the Bible reveals; the product of his regenerating Spirit; the necessary qualification for fellowship with him on earth; the only fitness for heaven.

A view of the mercies of God melting the heart to re-

pentance.—What should be our condition were we to discover that the man whom we had been regarding as our bitter enemy, and treating him as such, opposing his will, thwarting his purposes, traducing his reputation, injuring his interests, wronging and wounding him with an inventive ingenuity of mischief—that this man has all the while been acting the part of our best friend—that while we were misconceiving his principles, and misconstruing his conduct, he has been unwearied in the exercise of kindness, devising plans for our happiness, consulting our interests at the expense of his own, relinquishing good and encountering evil for our sake? What a pang of intolerable anguish would the discovery send through our hearts! what shame! what self-loathing! what eagerness to compensate for the past, and to attest the sincerity of our penitence, by the unremitting devotedness of self-denied activity in the service of him whom we have wronged! Similar in nature, though heavier in pressure, and keener in agony, are the feelings of a sinner, when first, by the illumination of the Divine Spirit, he discerns the true character of the Being against whom he has all along been trespassing—whom he has regarded with the feelings only of jealousy and suspicion, of distrust, and fear, and aversion—as all sternness and repulsiveness—an implacable foe, with the frown of wrath upon his brow, the threat of damnation on his lips, and the thunderbolt of vengeance in his hand: when, through the medium of the cross, he sees into the heart of God, and sees what an an Infinitude of love is there; when, instead of a ruthless enemy, he beholds the best and kindest of friends, whose very nature is love, who delights in mercy, who is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." This is the discovery that melts the heart to contrite sorrow. Holiness awes: justice alarms: *love subdues.* O, the pangs that wring the awakened sinner's soul, when he finds that he has all his life long been sinning against infinite love; that his hard and jealous thoughts of the Most High have been as false as they have been wicked, the foul calumnies of the father of lies. "He abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes." The heart of stone becomes a heart of flesh; and the mercies of God, disclosed to his mind by the Holy Spirit, laying him under obligations he never felt before; he loathes sin as hateful and dishonouring to the God of mercy, and as filling to the brim the cup of the Saviour's agony. On all the powers of his body, and faculties of his soul; on all he is, and on all he has, with full heart and melting eye, he inscribes,

"Holiness to the Lord," and from that time forward the *authority of God is his rule*, the *grace of God his motive*, the *glory of God his end*, and the *blessing of God his portion*. "Whether he lives, he lives to the Lord; and whether he dies, he dies to the Lord; living and dying he is the Lord's."

ANECDOTES.

THE following Anecdotes are from the life of the Rev. S. Kilpin, Baptist Minister at Exeter.

A PRACTICAL HINT.—One day, preaching, but not in his own pulpit, he mentioned God by the name of "the Deity." A sailor, who was listening, started from his seat, and exclaimed aloud, "Deity, well, who is he? Is he our God Almighty?" The attendants were about to turn him out; but the minister stood reproved, and requested him to resume his seat, with the remark, "Yes, my friend, I did mean the Almighty God." The sailor rejoined, "I thought so, but was not quite sure—I never heard that name before." The humbled minister replied, "You had a right to inquire. I was to blame; while delivering God's message of mercy to immortal souls, I ought not to have given him a name which prevented his message from being understood." "Thank you, Sir," was the sailor's reply, and he looked as though he would have devoured the remaining part of the sermon. After the service, he came and begged pardon for the interruption, and, with a sailor's frankness, requested the kind gentleman to take some refreshment with him, and make it up.

LABOUR LOST.—On another occasion, when from home, he preached on the divinity of Christ, and brought into view many objections, that he might oppose them. He felt more than usual complacency in the strength of his arguments, but one of the good people followed him to the vestry, and thanked him for the sermon, remarking, "It was a good discourse, but there was not one in the congregation that doubted the divinity of the Saviour." His devout mind was roused on reflecting that, instead of feeding the flock of Christ with the bread of life, he had been needlessly choking them with the sour grapes of controversy; and had, perhaps, excited in the minds of some unawakened sinners, doubts and difficulties of which before they had no idea. He ever after preached Christ, not as a controversialist, but as one anxious to win souls to his kingdom

PROVIDENTIAL GOODNESS.—Mr. Kilpin exerted his full strength for the salvation of the villagers around him. He regularly preached weekly lectures amidst persecution, in various forms, at the hazard of his life. In one instance, a party who were wrongly styled "gentlemen," unchained a vicious mastiff-dog, and leading him to the preaching room, fiercely directed him to attack the preacher, who was standing on the floor. The dog entered, apparently with the intention of obeying its master's orders; but the mild countenance and voice of the preacher arrested him; and when the poor creature was patted on the neck, and told to be still, he peacefully took his station at the feet of his new friend, whence no one could remove him until the service was concluded. This was a severe rebuke to his cruel master.

THE DEVIL OUTWITTED.—The piety of Kilpin's father was equally marked. He was an ironmonger, and kept a general retail shop in that line. A nobleman in the neighbourhood was among his best customers. One Sabbath morning the steward came to his house and said, with an insolent sneer, "Are you afraid of the devil, Mr. Kilpin?" "No," replied the good man, "I am not." "Will you then, sell me some articles to-day?" "No, I will not—it is the Sabbath day, and I fear God! To-morrow I shall feel much obliged by executing his Lordship's orders." "Very well, if you will not serve me to-day, you shall not to-morrow, or any other day." The steward retired in a rage. This scene was never forgot by the family. It is pleasing to add, that the nobleman increased his favours when informed of the circumstance.

POLITICS AND RELIGION.

The Christian *may* take an interest in public affairs—nay, he ought to maintain a ceaseless jealousy over the Constitution and freedom of his country; but a constant, and noisy, and factious meddling in party politics, is as injurious to his own personal religion, as it is to the interest of piety in general. *We do not cease to be citizens, when we become Christians; but we are in danger of ceasing to be Christians when we become politicians.* It is with politics, as with money; it is not the temperate use, but the immoderate love of it, that is the root of all evil. Thousands of professors of religion have made shipwreck of their faith and a good conscience, during the

tempests of political agitation; let Christians then as they value their lives, be cautious how they embark on this stormy and tempestuous ocean.—*Charleston Observer.*

ON THE GLORY OF GOD.

THE glory of any thing is the manifestation of its excellence: and the perception of that excellence awakens emotions of admiration and pleasure in the mind. The glory of Jehovah is the display of the moral excellence of his nature. His wisdom, his goodness, his mercy, power, holiness, and justice, exhibited in action, displayed by any mode of manifestation, is a disclosure of the Divine character, a revelation of the nature of God. As every display of the moral perfections of God, is fitted to awaken emotions of wonder, love, and praise, in the minds of all good beings, the manifestations of God's moral excellence, is fitly denominated the glory of the Lord.

Go forth at summer noon-day: look over the face of the landscape: you see it bright with summer splendour, and you pronounce it glorious. You look upwards to the heavens, and it is from the sun you see that all this summer radiance streams, and you pronounce him glorious. The light of the sun is the glory of the sun.

Go forth in the night season. The moon careers in broad and cloudless majesty through the heavens. Nature reposes in silence beneath the soft and silvery lustre. You feel the grandeur of the scene, and pronounce it glorious. The light of the moon is the glory of the moon.

Look at the king on the throne. Does he administer the laws with equity? Does he win all hearts by condescension and generosity? After the magnificence of the court assemblage has passed away, does he delight to cheer, by his alms, the widow's cottage; to redress the wrongs of the injured; to repair the ruin of some sad disaster; to reprieve the doomed criminal, and bid him live? Such a regal character is truly glorious. It is such qualities as these: equity in a king; dignity, mingled with condescension; power, mingled with generosity and benevolence; justice, tempered with kindness and clemency; largeness of mind and means, accompanied, as in Solomon, with largeness of heart: it is this assemblage of kingly virtues, that constitutes the glory of a king.

You see a man abound in riches: but he is also rich in

good works; the families of the surrounding poor rejoice in his bounty. His beneficence is his glory.

I have got my mortal enemy within my grasp: shall I strike, and be revenged? No! I forgive my enemy. Is this meanness? Is this a shame? No! it is my glory. "It is the glory of a man to pass by a transgression."

Apply these illustrations, infinitely heightened as they must be, to the Divine character, and you will be able to form some idea of what we are to understand by the "Glory of the Lord." The glory of the Lord is not a material glory, which addresses the bodily eye, it is a moral and spiritual glory, revealed to minds. God is a Spirit; and it is spiritually that his glory is to be discerned. The glorious light of the noon-day sun; the light which beamed from the face of Moses, when he descended from Mount Sinai; the visible glory, the light of which, on Sinai, was like devouring fire in the eyes of Israel; the glory which filled the temple of Solomon is the light which enveloped Jesus on the mount of transfiguration; the dazzling splendour which surrounded Christ when he appeared to John in Patmos, when his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength, and John fell at his feet as dead; the inconceivable splendour which shall encompass the Redeemer at his glorious appearing in flaming fire, with his mighty angels, and his resurrection saints at the Judgment day, when the sun in the firmament shall become dim before him: all these manifestations of glory addressing the eyes, are but types and symbols of that moral and spiritual glory of the Divine character, the perception of which awakens admiration, and love, and joy, in the breasts of angels and of saints. God is light; God is love; God is holy, wise, and good: the manifestation of God, as light, and love, and wisdom, and goodness, is his glory: and to admire him, love him, confide in him, praise him, worship him, is to "glorify God." Think of that Being who is the fountain of existence to all his creatures; who is the source, not only of being, but of blessedness; who is the author, not only of all existence, but of all goodness and happiness to his creatures throughout all his worlds; who is himself the *source*, and *sum*, and STANDARD of all moral excellence; who reared the stupendous fabrick of the universe, upholds it by his power, and pervades it by his presence; who is from everlasting to everlasting, without possibility of change; whose majesty is blended with mercy; whose justice and grace shine harmoniously combined; of whose nature, attributes, and operations, love is the grand comprehensive character: this is Jehovah; Jehovah,

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: this is Jehovah in the full orbed splendour of his perfections: Jehovah in the completeness and harmony of his moral perfections; and these moral perfections, united, exhibited in harmonious and mingled manifestation, constitute the "glory of Jehovah."

Let us beware of conceiving of the Divine attributes, as so many separate and distinct beings in God. The justice of God, is God acting, according to the eternal necessity of his nature, in justice to himself, and in justice to his creatures. The wisdom of God, is God acting in accordance with the infinite wisdom of his own eternal mind. The goodness of God, is God acting according to the infinite and necessary benevolence of his own nature. Neither are we to suppose that God puts off one attribute, in order to clothe himself for acting in another. We are not to imagine that he acts at one time as a God of justice merely, and at another time as a God of goodness merely: his justice is always regulated by goodness, and his goodness by justice: he is "as just as merciful, and as merciful as just." He is a sovereign, but not an arbitrary sovereign: the supreme sovereignty of his will, is ever guided by infinite wisdom, equity, and love. Let us, then, set before our minds, the glory of God in the union and harmony of his attributes,

> "Nor set at odds Heaven's jarring attributes,
> Nor one perfection with another wound."

In natural philosophy, by means of an instrument called the prism, we can analyze a ray of light, and find that it can be distinguished into different colours—green, blue, yellow, violet, crimson, &c.; and it is the union and blending together of these colours which constitute the perfect white. In divinity we analyze the attributes of Jehovah; we distinguish them into his wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. As the union of colours in the rays of light, constitutes the pure and perfect white, the harmony of the Divine attributes constitutes the "Glory of God."

Goodness may be viewed as the sum of the Divine glory. His name is love. Love is the comprehensive character of his nature. All the manifestations of the Divine character may be regarded as so many modifications of love. The punishment of the wicked may be considered as love to unfallen beings, operating as a moral means to deter them from transgression, and thus save them from wrath. Severity to the guilty, is goodness to the good. When Moses

was on the mount with Jehovah, he urged this suit, "I beseech thee shew me thy glory." What was the reply of Jehovah? "I will make all my *goodness* to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee." His goodness, then, is his glory. And what was the "name of the Lord," which the Lord proclaimed to Moses? "I am the Lord, the Lord God, (Jehovah, Jehovah Elohim, Gods) merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; and will by no means clear the guilty." The mercy of God; the mercy of God, extending salvation to the fallen children of men; the mercy of God, based upon the satisfaction of his justice, in the substitutionary sacrifice of the Son of God, is his chief glory. This should be our chief joy. We glorify God most, in glorifying his mercy, and glorifying his Son, by laying hold of his salvation. The Spirit glorifies the Father and the Son, by showing us this salvation. And the earth shall be "filled with the glory of the Lord," when it shall be *filled with men* enjoying the salvation of God, and glorifying him as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, by loving, obeying, and worshipping him. This is not the case now, but it will be the case yet. "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God." "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." "Blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory!"

As a type, and specimen, and pledge, that God will yet *fill* the *earth* with his glory, he can now *fill every heart.* May he shine into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Christ Jesus. May the glory of the Lord fill our hearts, as the glory filled the temple of Solomon!

CEPHAS.

INTELLIGENCE.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

ACCORDING to the report read at the meeting of the Society on the 15th of May last there are "Stations in heathen countries 239; Missionaries 97; native teachers 179; Schoolmasters and assistants 400; native churches 69; native communicants 5,149; scholars 24,144! It has always appeared to us, that it should be the chief object of European and American Missionaries to train up for the Christian ministry such native converts as are distinguished for piety, for talents, and aptness to teach. These native teachers possess

great and pre-eminent facilities in regard to the language, the cheapness of their support, the climate,—so peculiarly fatal to foreigners,—and their ready access to their countrymen, who are more likely to attend to the instructions of those who are bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh; who once worshipped the same gods, indulged in the same vices, and cherished the same prejudices.

INDIA.

[From Mr. Bowley's Journal at Chunar.] *Awakened Pilgrim.*—Came to Kythee. Our people walked into it, and spent more than half an hour in reading and speaking to the people. Several devotees and others were invited to the boat, and they came in the hope of an interview with us. Here Thakoor read the tract, "Sin no Trifle:" then Mr. Smith, and I after him, addressed them, showing them the sin of forsaking the true God for the creature, as is universally done by the Hindoos; especially proving the inefficacy and evil of trusting to the sun, to Gunga, &c.; and the folly and sin of looking for salvation to pilgrimages. We showed to them the infinite love and mercy of God in giving his Son to deliver us from sin and its consequences, and what he requires of us, viz. to be sorry for our past sins, to cast off all confidence in every false way, to embrace the Saviour of sinners, and to accept of mercy and pardon through his merits, &c. The leading man, a devotee, after hearing us, said publicly, that he had prepared to start the next morning on a pilgrimage to Ramiseram, 2000 miles distant; but that being convinced of the folly and evil of it, he should give it up, and act according to the direction now given them: and that he would, in a few days, bring two of his children to Chunar, and deliver them up to me for education, and for ever renounce his false ways.

Mahommedans.—There seems evidently a stir here among the Mussulmans. Though the disputants themselves seem little benefitted, the hearers see things differently, and are heard to approve of what we say. To-day, one man came with his Hindoostanee Testament (previously received) under his arm, begging it might be exchanged for a copy of the Psalms; as he said he had read the book through, and had copied it out to the Ephesians, for his younger brother's use, who required the marks to be placed above and below the letters, to enable him to read correctly.

Pious Rajah.—We went on to the Rajah's, with whom I had an interview fifteen months before. On being seated, I questioned a Brahmin, in his presence, about what he heard of Christianity the last time I was here. He said every thing was very good, but he did not remember any thing: on which, it was very pleasing to hear the Rajah repeat the substance of what he had heard, viz. of salvation by Christ, and Christ alone; and that ever since, he has renounced his own faith, and trusts in none but Christ. During the whole time he was speaking, he appeared in an humble posture, with his hands clasped before us, as if addressing his spiritual guides. He spoke openly of his faith in Christ; his son, a young man of about twenty-five, and a Brahmin, being present. He says, that ever since, he has been in the habit of reading the Hinduwee Testament himself, and has engaged a man, who is now on a visit to Benares, to read to him daily; and that he can now, in consequence, understand people when they speak of

Christianity. Our hearts being thus cheered, we now spoke to him more fully of the way of salvation, reading several passages from the gospels; and he heard the word with gladness, and, with hands joined together, said, that he had spent eighty years of his life yoked to the service of the Devil; notwithstanding which, God was willing to take him into his service. He said, he trusts to none, and he should trust to none but Christ to the end of his days. He further said, that he had resigned the management of his estate, and all his temporal affairs, to his son, and had retired from the distractions of the world. On taking leave he approached us, as disciples taking leave of their Gooroo, to touch our feet; and told our reader, Thakoor, who salaamed him, tapping him on the shoulder, that he was blessed in having such a religion.

Feb. 6th, 1833.—In the forenoon we all three called upon the Rajah, and had some very interesting conversation with him; his son also being present the greater part of the time. In reply to questions put to him he said, that since he had seen me, he has given over all Poojah and idol-worship, and transferred the whole to his son:—notwithstanding, he had the Hindoo mark on his forehead. He said, he had given away these things, because he was sure they were of no avail to him, and trusted now to none but Christ the Supreme. "If you deem these things of no avail," I said, "how can you justify your conscience in transferring them over to your son?" In reply, he emphatically stamped his feet, saying, he only sought for sure footing for himself; then (stretching out his hands, and drawing them in again) he would draw the family after him. "Though a Brahmin," continued he, "and called a Padre, yet I have no confidence in the distinction; nay, I do not believe in it, but feel myself a great sinner who needs salvation, and trust in none but Christ."—Since he saw me last, he has been speaking of these matters to his family, and urged them to renounce Hindooism; but they were all importunate with him, begging he would not disgrace and ruin the whole family by an open profession of Christianity. He might, they said, renounce Hindooism in private, and follow the dictates of Christianity in secret, but no good could result from degrading himself and them. He told them, they might consider him an outcast, since he had no more faith in their system; but he would not follow them to the ruin of his soul. He needed neither the world nor money, of which God had given him abundance; but, alas! what will these avail him when he comes to render an account to God! He candidly acknowledged, that the reader, William Churrun, while here urged him to embrace Christianity; but that he did not really understand what Christianity was till he saw me. He, however, employed a man to read the New Testament in Hinduwee, recommended by William. During the whole of this interview, I felt powerfully that we had an humble disciple, and a real babe in Christianity before us, who was under the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

Candid Brahmin.—Early this morning our readers visited three villages. At one village they met with encouragement, by the people attending to the Word and accepting tracts. I went in a different direction to two other villages; and at one sat under the shade of a tree with a rich native, who has a substantial brick-built house, which he said he was six years in building. This man is a Brahmin, and in affluent circumstances, but illiterate; he however proved to be a man

not void of reason, and gladly and candidly heard and spoke on the most important religious points. He seemed to see clearly the sin of worshipping any other than the Supreme Being, whose love was manifested in the gift of his Son Jesus Christ for the redemption of the world. On taking leave, he accepted of two tracts; and promised to call at my tent for a larger book, which he would for the future have read to him. His son, a young man, seeing him take the tracts asked, in a manifest tone of contempt, the reason of his accepting those books. The father, who is about fifty-five years of age, replied: "I intend henceforth to renounce all our idol-worship, and look to no other than the Supreme Being, who is a Spirit.

Roman Catholic Female.—A poor Portugese Roman Catholic woman, who has attended our services since Passion week, is suffering most severe persecutions in consequence from her Roman Catholic neighbours, who are reproaching her, and trying every sort of means to draw her back. She remarked that there was no love, affection, nor regard among those of their own communion; whereas, among our people, she saw the people flocking round the sick, though ever so poor: Besides, we attended to the wants of indigent and infirm Christians. Hence it is evident that the lives of Christians preach loudly.

Self-tormentor—In walking to the Ghant, I saw a man who came here only yesterday, to perform the penance of standing day and night for years. He had ropes suspended from a bough of thesacred Peepul-tree, to about four feet from the ground; and upon these he had suspended a board of about eighteen inches broad and two feet long; and upon it he had placed a bolster, on which he rested his chest. On speaking to him of what had happened to a man similarly situated, some years since, at Gorruckpore, he stretched out his legs, showing how they had suffered from his having stood now but two years; they were swollen, and ulcers were breaking out in various paces. Poor creature! he had nothing to say in his defence which was not repugnant to reason and common sense. Great crowds gathered round, and seemed to approve of all that I said. On my return to the spot, two hours after, I found he was gone; and the people said he he had taken himself off altogether.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Pocket Commentary, Consisting of Critical Notes on the New Testament, original and selected from the most Eminent Biblical Critics and Commentators. By DAVID DAVIDSON, *Editor of "The Family Bible," &c.* Edinburgh: WAUGH and INNES. Belfast: HUGH REA, 17, Waring-street.

WE have long thought that a popular Commentary, in a condensed form, was a *desideratum* in the department of sacred literature. We have long had commentaries, enough and to spare; but, with some happy exceptions, they are unsuited

to the general reader. Some of them are too critical for any but students; some are too voluminous for general use, and nearly all are too expensive. We wanted a Commentary, small in its dimensions, clear in its criticisms, doctrinal in its spirit, practical in its tendencies, and so cheap in its price as to come within the reach of the poorest class.

Such a desideratum has been happily supplied. We have it in the small but invaluable volume, which we have the pleasure to introduce and recommend to our numerous readers. We have been greatly pleased with the perusal of this unpretending volume. The doctrinal sentiments of the author are strictly evangelical; his views of divine truth clear and comprehensive, and his exposition of difficult passages, far as our observation extends, exceedingly just and judicious. No Christian father, no Christian mother, should want this most valuable auxiliary in the work of family instruction. Will Sabbath-school teachers permit us to recommend to *their* individual attention this small volume, as an invaluable treasure in their department? They will, we are persuaded, thank us for this recommendation. Nor can we refrain from recommending it to another class of labourers—we refer to Scripture readers; they will find in a small compass, the result of many a long and laborious research; nor will they be dissatisfied with us for recommending them to use it as a "*Pocket* Commentary."

We have understood, from an authentic source, that the esteemed author of this volume, has been urged by some eminent biblical expositors of his own country (Scotland), to prepare a similar work on the Old Testament. We would venture to add our humble entreaty to the same effect. Let him furnish the church with another such book, and we can assure him the church will decide that he has not "lived in vain." May he be "immortal, until, at least, this 'work is done.'"

DOCTOR DOYLE.

Rumours having gone abroad, previous to the death of the late Doctor Doyle, that a change had taken place in his sentiments, in favour of Protestant doctrines we have been anxiously looking out for the evidence on which the public report of a change so pleasing rested. The report of Doctor Doyle's conversion, was in circulation before his death, and received public contradiction. It was stated confidently in his own neighbourhood, that he refused to allow himself

to be anointed. This might, however, have been done after he lost the power of resistance. It is said, that the report of his conversion obtained such general credence in the vicinity of Carlow, that comparatively few of the Roman Catholic peasantry attended his funeral. Such was his benevolent consideration for the poor, that he died without leaving a penny behind him. It was generally believed in the neighbourhood that he avowed his exclusive dependence in the merit of the Saviour. The "Protestant Penny Magazine," which is our authority for these particulars, mentions two anecdotes to establish the belief that Dr. Doyle, for a considerable time before his death, felt the need of a better foundation for acceptance, than that which is exhibited by the Church of Rome. In 1830, a Protestant clergyman published in a Roman Catholic news-paper, in Carlow, the account of a sermon, which he had just heard Doctor Doyle preach in that town, and this he was induced to do, from the striking approximation of its sentiments to evangelical truth. "The Doctor," says that gentleman, "concluded his very impressive discourse, by exhorting his people, not to place even the least dependence in their good works or contrition, their prayers or their tears; if you do, you build upon the sand, which, when the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, will be swept away. We must, he said, attend to the declaration of the Apostle Paul, 'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' Build upon this, and this *only*, and you are safe: look to the blood of Jesus and you are secure."

Another fact occurred at a subsequent period, which is mentioned as a more striking evidence of a change in his religious views and feelings, and as a departure from the Romish System. Conversing with a lady who had avowedly abandoned the church of Rome, and who, at the time of the interview, was supposed to be dying, he said, "her faith was so strong in the blood of Christ, it would supersede the necessity of faith in other matters; and although she would not die in the *body* of the church, he had no doubt but she would die in the *soul* of the church." This, certainly, though the phrase—"necessity of faith in other matters," is spurious and erroneous, must be admitted to be at variance with the Roman Catholic doctrine of exclusive salvation.

It is hoped that clearer light may yet be afforded respecting the concluding scene of Dr. Doyle's life. We can easily admit what is stated respecting the vigilance with which attending priests guarded every avenue by which any indication of a change

should find its way to the public, as a satisfactory reason for the lack of that fulness of evidence which we would desire. It is certain that such reports were current, were extensively credited in the immediate neighbourhood of Dr. Doyle, and that they made an impression on the Roman Catholic population of the place. The priests naturally wish to remove every such impression from the public mind; and that they felt on the subject, we consider evident, from the circumstance, that such a vast assemblage as two hundred of them met together, to keep Dr. Doyle's "*Month's Mind*," at Carlow. By the way, this celebrating of mass for the repose of the souls of the popes, bishops, and clergy of the Roman Catholic Church, is a most absurd contradiction in their system, seeing they arrogate to themselves such power over the invisible world, as to unbind, at pleasure, the purgatorial chains of their votaries.

As to Dr. Doyle, all that we know of his reported conversion is before our readers, let them judge for themselves.

CEPHAS.

ORDINATION.

ON Tuesday, the 26th of August, the Rev. George B. Coulter was ordained, by the Presbytery of Monaghan, to the pastoral charge of the Presbyterian Secession Congregation of Castleblaney. The ordination sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. Creighton, of Bray, county Wicklow. The text was chosen from 2d Cór. vi. 1—"We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." Mr. Creighton's sermon presented a rich and gratifying display of pulpit eloquence, and was listened to by a crowded audience with deep attention. The Rev. M. M'Auley of Cahans, defended Presbyterian Church government with great ability, put the questions of the Formula, offered up the ordination prayer, and then delivered a most excellent charge to minister and and people. Such was the impression produced by the charge, and the defence of Presbyterianism, that a general and pressing application has been addressed to Mr. M'Auley for their publication. The Rev. Joseph O'Reilly, of Lisbellaw, county Fermanagh, concluded the services, by preaching an excellent sermon from 2d Cor. viii. 5, "But first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." After divine service, the Presbytery and a number of other guests sat down to an excellent dinner, provided by the congregation. As a proof of the progress of the temperance reformation, it was resolved by the congregation to exclude ardent spirits in every form from the entertainment.

Wilson, Printer, 70, High-street.